

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 04184 092257Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-15 IO-14 HEW-06 SAB-02 /095 W  
-----100545Z 009015 /10

R 092223Z JUN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2297  
INFO PANCANAL  
USCINCSO

UNCLAS PANAMA 4184

EO 11652: N/A  
TAGS: SHUM, PN  
SUBJECT: ARCHBISHOP SPEAKS ON HUMAN RIGHTS TIE TO NEGOTIATIONS

1. A JUNE 4 TELEVISION INTERVIEW OF ARCHBISHOP MARCOS MCGRATH WAS GIVEN BANNER FRONT-PAGE HEADLINES IN JUNE 9 "LA ESTRELLA" AND "STAR & HERALD", BUT WAS NOT COVERED IN PRO-GOP ERSA PAPERS. IN THE INTERVIEW MCGRATH STATED THAT THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE COULD POST A "SERIOUS OBSTACLE TO TREATY RATIFICATION". BOTH THOSE WHO OPPOSE ANY NEW TREATY AND THOSE WHO OPPOSE ONE SIGNED BY THE TORRIJOS GOVERNMENT AVAIL THEMSELVES OF THE ISSUE, HE ADDED. THE QUESTION "MUST BE BROUGHT OUT INTO THE OPEN".

2. ARCHBISHOP CALLED TORRIJOS' RECENT DECISION TO PERMIT 82 EXILES TO RETURN "EXCELLENT". HE HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE BROADENED TO INCLUDE ALL EXILES.

3. HE PRAISED THE NEW U.S. EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS, SAYING: "I THINK THE CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION ALONG THESE LINES HAS BEEN FAVORABLY RECEIVED IN MANY SECTORS...AND IN PANAMA  
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WE HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE IF WE JOIN THAT CAMPAIGN, ALL TO THE CONTRARY."

4. WITH AN EYE ON THE CANAL TREATY PLEBISCITE HERE HE URGED THAT TREATIES BE FULLY EXPLAINED BY BOTH U.S. AND PANAMANIAN GOVERNMENTS TO THEIR PEOPLES AND THAT ALL POINTS OF VIEW BE AIRED IN DISCUSSING THEM.

5. HE COMMENTED THAT ON HIS MOST RECENT TRIP TO WASHINGTON HE HAD NOTICED FOR THE FIRST TIME "A SERIOUSNESS, AN OPTIMISM, A FEELING THAT CONCRETE RESULTS ARE BEING ACHIEVED ON THE MAIN POINTS IN THE DRAFTING OF A TREATY TEXT."

6. COMMENT: MCGRATH HIMSELF RAISED THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE IN HIS INTERVIEW. WITH DISCUSSION OF TORRIJOS'S DECISION TO ALLOW SOME OF THE EXILED TO RETURN, AND MAYIN CORREA'S TV PANEL ON HUMAN RIGHTS (SEE PANAMA 3930) STILL CURRENT, NOW IS AN OPPORTUNE MOMENT FOR THE ARCHBISHOP TO SPEAK ON THIS ISSUE. HE WAS, AS HE USUALLY IS, BALANCED IN HIS APPROACH. HE CRITICIZED FOR INSTANCE, BOTH THOSE WHO DEFINE HUMAN RIGHTS SOLELY AS SOCIETAL RIGHTS (READ MINISTER AHUMADA) AND THOSE WHO DEFINE THEM ONLY AS INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HUMAN RIGHTS, SPEECHES, NEGOTIATIONS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
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**Subject:** ARCHBISHOP SPEAKS ON HUMAN RIGHTS TIE TO NEGOTIATIONS  
**TAGS:** SHUM, PN, (MCGRATH, MARCOS)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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